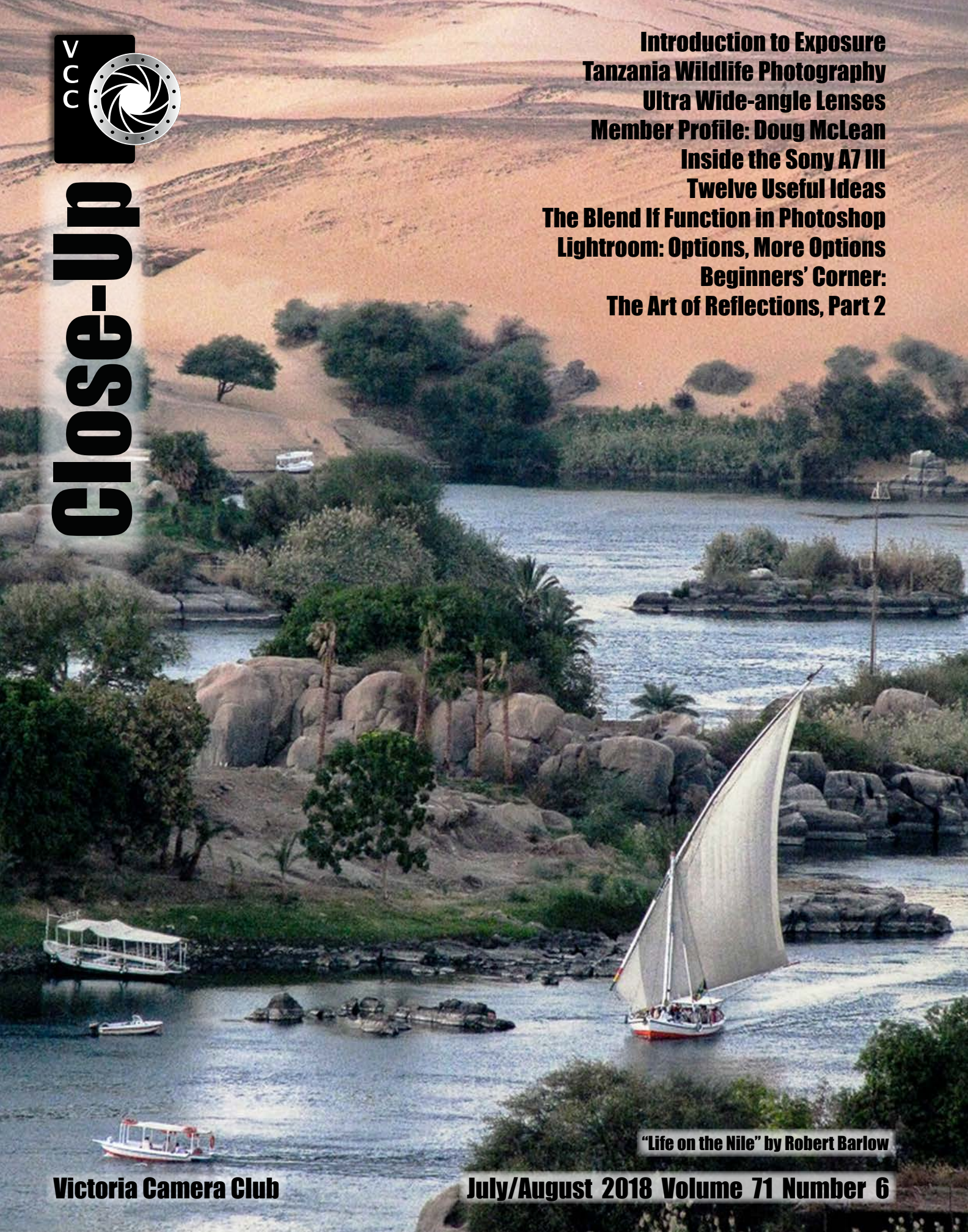
Close-Up

Introduction to Exposure
Tanzania Wildlife Photography
Ultra Wide-angle Lenses
Member Profile: Doug McLean
Inside the Sony A7 III
Twelve Useful Ideas
The Blend If Function in Photoshop
Lightroom: Options, More Options
Beginners' Corner:
The Art of Reflections, Part 2



"Life on the Nile" by Robert Barlow

Victoria Camera Club

July/August 2018 Volume 71 Number 6

FUJIFILM
X-T100

Every moment is a memory waiting to be captured. The FUJIFILM X-T100 is your companion in everyday life, letting you document your day through photography

In combination with newly introduced three-way tilting LCD monitor and high resolution and high magnification (0.62x) organic EL electronic viewfinder, the FUJIFILM X-T100 is versatile, reliable and the ideal companion for executing creativity.

The FUJIFILM X-T100 combines a 24.2 megapixel APS-C sensor with the image processing engine to achieve FUJIFILM's renowned photo quality.

London Drugs has camera equipment for every level of photographer. We can even special order items for you.
Visit any one of our four convenient Victoria locations today and speak to one of our photo experts

LONDON DRUGS®
londondrugs.com

Colwood Corners Shopping Centre • 1907 Sooke Road • **(250) 474-0900**
Harris Green Village • 201 - 911 Yates St • **(250) 360-0880**
Saanich Centre • 127 - 3995 Quadra St • **(250) 727-0246**
Tillicum Centre • Y003a, 3170 Tillicum Road • **(250) 360-2654**

Victoria Camera Club

"Victoria Harbour Full Moon" by Ian Faris

Established in 1944, the Victoria Camera Club is a group of people who share the love of photography. We come together to appreciate each other's images, to learn, both from the feedback on our own images and from the images of others, and to exchange tips on how and where to take effective photographs. Our focus is on continuous learning. Our media include both film and digital and our expertise ranges from novice to master.

Events

We hold a number of events including:

- Three meetings a month from September to April (excluding December)
- Field trips
- Workshops
- Special Interest Groups (SIGs)
- Competitions within the Club and externally

Meetings begin at 7:30 PM at Norway House, 1110 Hillside Avenue, Victoria, BC.

Membership

Annual fees include all workshops (except studio shoots and special events), meetings and all field trips unless travel/accommodation is involved. Annual fees are: Individual, $85; Family, $128; Student, $43.

For current event information and locations please go to the website *victoriacameraclub.ca* where you can also read or download the colour version of *Close-Up*.

Close-Up is the magazine of the Victoria Camera Club.

Copyright ©, Victoria Camera Club, 2018, all rights reserved. Mailing address: PO Box 46035, RPO Quadra, Victoria, BC, V8T 5G7. Editor, Richard James, e-mail to *editor@victoriacameraclub.ca* for submissions or to advertise in ***Close-Up***. Deadline for submissions for the September/October 2018 issue is August 5th 2018.

For additional information: please contact:

Membership: *membership@victoriacameraclub.ca*
Workshops: *workshops@victoriacameraclub.ca*
Field Trips: *fieldtrips@victoriacameraclub.ca*
Meetings: *meetings@victoriacameraclub.ca*
Website: *webmaster@victoriacameraclub.ca*
Close-Up: *editor@victoriacameraclub.ca*
President: *president@victoriacameraclub.ca*

What's Inside

Calendar and President's Message....4
Introduction to Exposure....5
Tanzania Wildlife Photography....6
Ultra Wide-angle Lenses....8
Competition Info....10
Member Profile: Doug McLean....17
Inside the Sony A7 III....19
Twelve Useful Ideas....20
How I Did It....22
Shoots Around Victoria....23
The Blend If Function in Photoshop....24
Lightroom: Options, More Options....25
Beginners' Corner: The Art of Reflections, Part 2....26

PSA Award-winning Website and Newsletter

2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2016 and 2017

CAPA Award-winning Newsletter 2015

Please support our advertisers.

Remember to tell them that you saw their ad in *Close-Up.* Member Discounts: VCC members can take advantage of discounts. Details are on the members section on our website.

The Victoria Camera Club is a member society of the Victoria Arts Council, Canadian Association for Photographic Arts (CAPA), and the Photographic Society of America (PSA).

Calendar

Our workshop and field trip program is too extensive to list in *Close-Up.* Please go to the calendar page on the website (*www.victoriacameraclub.ca)* for the latest details of all our workshops, field trips and meetings.

Our Norway House Meetings will resume in September. Workshops and Field Trips continue during the summer.

Field Trip Highlights: East Sooke Regional Park, Stargaze at Fort Rodd Hill NP, Esquimalt Lagoon and Island View Beach

Cover Image: "Life on the Nile" by Robert Barlow. Kim Smith and I were invited to participate in a charitable excursion to Ethiopia, sponsored by Third World Eye Care Society. We were part of a team of twenty plus doctors, opticians and volunteers from across Canada. Travelling with five thousand pairs of used and donated eye glasses as our checked baggage, our destination was Addis Ababa.

We spent two weeks with dedicated philanthropists, experiencing the pure joy and appreciation of Ethiopia's poor who, in some cases, left the clinic clearly seeing scenes for the first time instead of just a blurry haze. Imagine waking every day and viewing the world as a series of out-of-focus, over- or under-exposed pictures. It brings perspective to the boundless variety of "photo ops" in our daily lives.

Egypt was an add-on. After all, when flying all the way to North-east Africa, why not take the opportunity to view and capture on digital film, a desolate yet historical part of the world?

The cover photo, Life on the Nile, was one such capture. After spending the day among the temples of Abu Simbel, we had returned to Aswan. It was Happy Hour at our hotel, perched high on a hill overlooking the Nile, just North of the dam. While sampling local wine and recounting the experiences of the day, my attention was drawn to a myriad of waterborne activity below the hotel's patio area. The light was bordering on alpenglow. As happens in some of my favourite photos, the scene was unfolding and the configuration of vessels was "photo worthy" for only a matter of seconds.

There was no other planning or attention to technical details, but rather a quick composition, on full automatic, and the hope that the moment was captured.

Sometimes, photos just happen.

President's Message

Hello everyone, my name is Teri VanWell, your delighted new president. I am happy and honoured to assume this role in our Club. I am passionate about the art of photography and I intend to do my absolute best to leave a mark of this passion on our group.

I would like to begin by thanking all my predecessors who have made this Club the vital and active community it is today. A very special thank you to Garry Schaefer and Steve Smith who leave the executive to become regular members. The Club has benefited immensely from their time and expertise and I wish them the best. My hope is to approach my role in a way that does them and all other members proud.

At this moment the camera Club is running very smoothly because of all its involved and supportive community members. I am constantly impressed by the ideas, insight, and efforts that are put forth by members to help fellow members grow and thrive in the world of photography. I myself have grown and learned a great deal under the watchful and caring eyes of so many of you.

My intent is to support the current working and maintain the smooth running of the Club. I want to honour the past of the Club, particularly as we grow and adopt new members. A tight-knit feeling and tone are what has guaranteed the success of the Club in our changing world.

However, as we all know, change is an inevitable force. From new field trips and adventures to new camera technology, the Club has excelled at adapting and improving with the times and I intend to be encouraging and supportive of change that will continue to move us forward.

As we go through the summer months in Victoria, I'd like you to think about what you'd like to see for our upcoming season such as new locations for field trips, new techniques in a workshop or maybe you can share your story during member's night. Please reach out to me with any new (or old) ideas and thoughts you have for the continued enjoyment of our fellow Club members. If we know what our members are looking for, we can try to put something together and my door is always open.

Thank you again to all of the members for electing me as your president. I will do my best to represent and support all of you in the coming months. I am looking forward to taking photos and spending time with each of you.

Teri VanWell, President.

Introduction to Exposure

by Karl Schoepp

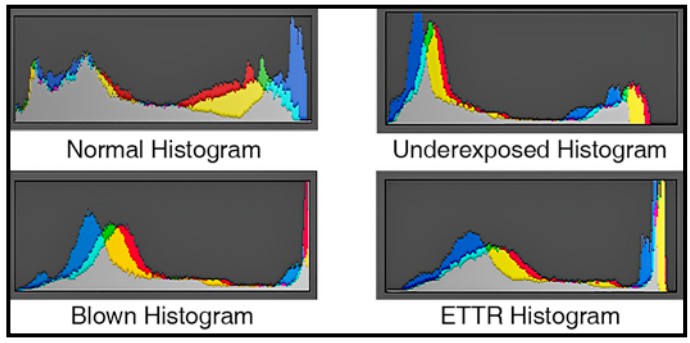
Many photographers will begin their journey into photography through the use of auto exposure, priority modes, JPG shooting and scene averaging metering. While these functions can give adequate results, they may not give the photographer the results they desire. Noisy, underexposed, and clipped images can sometimes be extremely frustrating.

There are many considerations regarding exposure settings. These include depth of field, desired aperture, desired shutter speed, subject motion, desired ISO settings, filter compensation, and shooting mode (RAW or JPEG). At the moment of capture, however, our exposure will only be based on our aperture, shutter speed, ISO selection and file type.

Although modern computer software allows extensive post-processing image modification for exposure with RAW files, our goal should be to shoot the desired image in camera with little or no post-processing modification. Mastering exposure will allow us to achieve the highest quality result possible, desired photographic impact, and will save us time and money on post-processing costs. A great way to practice exposure settings is shooting JPEGs only. JPEGs are less forgiving image files with a look (exposure, colour, and ISO etc.) applied and "baked in" (the settings cannot be changed without affecting image quality).

Every type of sensor has a usable dynamic range to which our exposure should conform. Dynamic range is the variance of contrast between light and dark that our camera is able to capture. Although dynamic range considerations are less important with modern RAW shooting and HDR (high dynamic range) images, every sensor has a limited dynamic range. Furthermore, HDR is a limited function that is better to use only when needed. We can confirm that we have correct exposure settings to fully use our dynamic range by referring to our camera's histogram.

A histogram is a digital graph of exposure that our camera is capturing (as shown in the in-camera JPG image). Always use the RGB histogram display as this shows individual colour channels. When viewing a histogram, blacks are on the left side, mid-tones in the middle, and whites on the right. An image with good exposure should have data in the histogram across the majority of the histogram scale (without going off). When the graph of the histogram goes off either end



of the scale we will lose details in our image. When our blacks go off the scale (underexposed) we refer to this as crushing our blacks. When the whites go off the scale (overexposed) we referring to this as clipping our whites. When we crush or clip parts of our image, we will lose the information in those parts of the image. The data in these clipped or crushed areas may not be recoverable. The optimal exposure for capturing as a RAW file is "expose to the right" so that the highlights are just not clipped.

Digital photographers have the wonderful option of using their camera's built in spot metre to metre the blacks, mid-tones and highlights to check their exposure. The spot metre can be used to ensure our blacks and highlights fall within the dynamic range of our camera, based on the exposure variables that have been selected. A quick and easy way to discover if highlights are clipped is to observe the "highlight-alert" feature. Many camera models will "blink" clipped highlights when viewing the image after taking.

The image below of a WWII fire truck taken at the BC Aviation Museum is underexposed. The histogram in this example would appear as the underexposed histogram example above. The underexposed shadow details are not recoverable, and the highlight range is compressed. Therefore this photograph went from being one of the best of the shoot to unusable based on the exposure selected.

"WW II Fire Truck"

Tanzania Wildlife Photography

by Suzanne Huot

In early 2017 I was fortunate to spend five weeks in Tanzania to photograph mammals and birds that inhabit those parts. Each park is home to diverse herds of animals and flocks of birds.

Tarangire National Park is famous for its elephant population. The Tarangire River, which flows through the park, has abundant water even during the dry season making this an ideal location for the elephants that need gallons of water to quench their thirst and to bathe. During our visit, we spent three days following a pack of 22 endangered wild African spotted dogs giving us many great photo opportunities.

"African Spotted Dogs"

Moving on from this National Park one can visit the Ngorongoro Crater, a World Heritage Site, home to the largest concentration of mammals found in such a small area. The Crater was formed 3 million years ago and covers 260 square kilometres.

My main objective, however, was Ndutu located at the most southern point of the Serengeti and the place where the wildebeest migration, in their endless search for fresh grass, ends. This is where they give birth during the month of February and present an exciting opportunity for a wildlife photographer who is always trying to get that rare shot. But this calving season also attracts predators always in search of an easy meal.

One of the smallest and shyest feline predators found in Tanzania weighing in at 20 kilograms is the serval cat. It is best known for having the largest ears and the longest legs of the entire cat family. Its long legs allow it to leap up over two metres thus enabling it to catch birds flushed off the ground. Its large ears allow it to hear the rustle of rodents in the tall grass.

"Serval"

Ndutu is where I decided to spend 25 days following three lion prides as well as three cheetah mothers with their cubs. When we arrived, we were informed that ten days earlier a lioness had given birth to six cubs. Lion and cheetah cubs are extremely vulnerable to predators when their mothers are away hunting. Lions hunt at night while cheetahs hunt during the day. The Lioness, Cassandra as she had been named, was an experienced mother having had three previous litters. Even so she lost three of her current litter to jackals which had been spotted hanging around the den. They were assumed to be the culprits but hyenas also prey on cubs.

A lioness always leaves the pride to give birth and stay hidden for two months before introducing her cubs to the pride. Sometimes her sister lioness will visit and help with the hunt but mostly she has to manage on her own for the duration.

"Playtime with Cassandra"

Cassandra had given birth in the middle of a small group of trees. One day the rains came and flooded her little den. We were certain that the very small cubs would either drown or die of hypothermia. The next day, much to our dismay, the little family was gone. However, during the night, she had carried the cubs, one by one, to an even smaller stand of Acacia that was nearby and in the middle, had made a den for herself and the cubs.

"Cassandra Carries Cubs to Safety"

During the next twenty-one days we would arrive before sunrise and spend several hours quietly waiting for the cubs to come out and play in front of the den. Cassandra allowed us about twenty minutes to watch and photograph her cubs before gently herding them into their tiny den. If a cub became too adventurous, wanting to come closer to our vehicle, she would gently pick it up with her mouth and carry it back to the play area. In the evening, she would once more allow the cubs out for some playtime and, after a while, return them to the den. When darkness fell she would go out and hunt if she was hungry.

On another occasion, we were driving through a different area when we came across another lioness carrying her newborn cubs whose eyes were still closed. We believed the reason for her moving was that her six siblings had found her den and were pawing the cubs and might have accidentally maimed or killed one of them. Our driver put the vehicle between the den and the young lions until the lioness had safely moved her three cubs to a new location. This lioness was actually a daughter of Cassandra from an earlier litter. We kept the location secret and did not visit her again so as not to disturb her.

During this twenty-one day stay in the Ndutu area we followed a cheetah mother with a single cub we estimated to be some three months old. It was amazing to see her bring down a Thompson gazelle stag and present it to her cub. The cub's instincts were evident as it went straight for the throat of the gazelle when the mother placed it on the ground.

"Cheetah Cub with Mother's Trophy"

Another photographic highlight took place when we followed a cheetah mom with four older cubs. What stood out was the amazing playfulness of the cubs and how patient she was with them, even joining in the fun. We watched her teaching them hunting techniques, climbing trees and eventually resting.

"Cheetah Cubs Play with Mother'"

Wildlife photography will be more successful if you can target a particular group of animals or birds, observing them in their habitat. It is best to concentrate on a select group for the more time you spend with your subject the better you will understand it and become aware of what its next move might be. This results in more interesting photos.

Please note that we always kept a respectable distance from the cubs and the dens. We could quite easily get group photos with a lens as short as 70-200 mm. One does not always need a long lens to capture larger wildlife. In fact, sometimes you can have a situation of too much lens on a large mammal. A wide-angle lens is also useful as it allows you to show not only your subject but can compose a more complete image showing the mammal in its habitat.

Ultra Wide-angle Lenses

by Richard James

Definition: An ultra wide-angle lens is anything below about 28 mm (all focal lengths are full frame equivalent, so a 12 mm DX lens is effectively 18 mm).

Why use an ultra wide-angle lens? The two usual reasons are that you can't get far enough away from the scene to get everything you want in the frame or, you deliberately want the distortion effects that can be obtained with these lenses.

There may even be situations where you cannot get a very wide panorama in a single frame even with an ultra wide-angle lens. Since these lenses are prone to distortion around the edges it becomes more difficult to assemble multiple frames into a panorama. It can be done, providing the camera sensor is truly vertical but may still require you to do a little patching up on distant parts of the image if the panorama software doesn't get the matching quite right. An example of this would be a 180° panorama taken at 90° to straight beach. As discussed below, you may also have trouble with banding in blue skies.

Depending on the aperture of the lens that you choose, screw-on filters may not be possible as the larger aperture lenses tend to have a bulbous front element. In this case you're looking at a new filter system with a filter holder for either 10 or 15 cm drop-in filters. This undoubtedly adds to the cost but if you want to get long exposures for those soft moving clouds and smooth waves then you just have to bite the bullet. Several manufacturers make adapters for these lenses.

There are a few significant issues with ultra wide-angle lenses that you need to consider:

Linear distortion: These lenses tend to have some degree of barrel or pincushion distortion which is evident around the edges (lines are not straight, they are bowed) and, if the sensor is not parallel to the plane of the subject then parallel lines are not parallel.

Perspective Distortion: Close objects appear relatively larger while distant objects appear relatively smaller thus exaggerating distance perspective. A lens of around 45-50 mm is considered to give "normal perspective" as viewed by the human eye. Ultra wide-angle lenses stretch this and telephoto lenses compress it. Foreground objects close to the edges show more distortion with ultra wide-angle lenses.

Any lens will distort lines if the sensor is not parallel to the subject plane. If you point the lens up to capture the top of a building with less of the foreground then the building appears to be falling backwards. With normal or longer lenses you can often fix this in software. With ultra wide-angle lenses it becomes more difficult to do so.

For landscapes the distortion is generally not an issue unless you have "obviously vertical" objects close to the edge of the frame or the horizon is near the top or bottom of the image in which case it is likely to be curved and not straight.

Polarization: Light from blue sky is polarized with the maximum at 90° to the sun. Many plants also have highly reflective leaves and petals. With ultra wide-angle lenses skies are often a problem showing varying degrees of blueness that are more apparent than with the naked eye. Since the angle of coverage is more than 90°, unless you are shooting directly away from the sun (or into it), you are likely to see this effect. Use of polarizing filters is not recommended as this makes it worse. For plants, however, polarizing filters may work well in minimizing glare from leaves and petals.

Lens Flare: Ultra wide-angle lenses, especially wide aperture lenses, are prone to lens flare when pointed close to the sun angle. By this I mean the sun is not in the frame but it is close to the edge. Sometimes the lens hood supplied with the lens is not adequate to eliminate internal reflections if you're shooting at a very shallow angle to the sun. Under these circumstances you often get unwanted internal reflections from the lens elements due to the "not quite in the frame" light from the sun or another bright source.

The solution here is to use your hand, a wide-brimmed hat or a piece of card to provide additional shade on the lens element without having the object in the frame. It's easiest to do this if you use a remote release and can stand to the side of the camera and see where the shadow is actually falling. What you want to see is that the shadow just covers the far edge of the lens. When you do this, or any time your eye isn't behind the viewfinder such as when using Liveview, remember to close the viewfinder shutter if your camera has one.

There are several possible solutions to these issues:

Sensor Vertical: Wherever possible keep the sensor plane vertical and parallel to the subject plane (left to right). If this too much foreground crop it out (e.g. panorama format, 16 x 9 or similar). This is particularly important with architecture where we expect verticals to be vertical, etc.

Perspective Distortion: Sometimes you can use distortion as a part of the composition, for example to emphasize foreground objects. A landscape image with a large empty foreground usually does not work very well. Pick a key object near to the camera position, place it carefully in the image and use its exaggerated size to your advantage to give depth to the image.

Lens Distortion: Pincushion and barrel distortion can often be removed in software, particularly if the software is using lens-specific profiles for correction. Some degree of linear and perspective distortion can also usually be resolved in software but remember that to do this you need to "shoot wide" as you will be cropping the sides.

Tripods: Preferably use a tripod, but you can do single-frame images hand-held if you are careful. Of course a tripod is essential if you are doing long exposures or panoramas. Use the built-in artificial horizon if your camera has one (in the viewfinder if hand-held otherwise on the LCD if it's on a tripod). You can also use the grid overlay display to help you get things straight. Apart from keeping the camera stable, it's much easier to get the sensor vertical and keep it there on a tripod. Using a tripod also tends to slow you down and gives you time to take more care over the composition of the image and the camera settings.

September Theme: Water

by Pam Irvine

The theme for September's competition is "Water." The purpose of themes is to challenge our members to photograph subjects they might not normally choose. Even if you do not enter images in competition (but we all would love to see your creations), your photographic skills will improve by pushing yourself into new areas. We strongly encourage members not to use an old image, but rather spend a bit of time shooting specifically for the theme. For example, look out for splashes of water or sprinklers with kids, dogs and rainbows. The possibilities are endless.

There are a lot of techniques to create fascinating and artistic images. Google is your best friend here as there is an unlimited amount of info and instructional videos on techniques when shooting water.

Carbonated Water Photography: The bubbles produced when an object is immersed in carbonated water can give a unique touch to what would have been just another picture. All you need is a bottle of soda water, a clean glass container and a subject. You will need to get close to capture the bubbles clearly so a tripod and a close-focusing lens will be helpful.

Liquid Flow Photography: A fancy name for food coloring dropped into water. You can also try cream or glycerin dyed with food colouring. Check out Google for lots of interesting examples and ideas.

Waterdrops on Glass: Water droplets on glass refract the colours and shapes underneath the glass for strong graphic images. All you need is a clean piece of glass and some interesting patterns or designs below the glass.

Waterdrops on a CD/DVD: It's hard not to be attracted to the intense rainbow colours you can see in CDs and DVDs. Try experimenting with drops of water on the surface of the disc. Using an eyedropper will help to control the position and size of the drops. A macro lens or close-up filter will be helpful. To get a variety of colour, tone, and contrast try moving the light source.

Water Splash Photography: This takes a bit more effort to setup but it is challenging to catch the splash of a drop of water at just the right moment. There are many tutorials on-line using everything from simple beginner techniques to setups with speedlights.

You have time to find or create that perfect image. We all look forward to seeing your images in the fall.

Year End Competition Judges

Our Year End Competition prints and digital images were judged by a team of three judges on April 7, 2018. There were a total of 444 images to review and consider. Due to the large number of images, photos were given placements (1st, 2nd, 3rd, HM) instead of scores or comments.

We extend our sincere thanks to the judges for the Year End competition: Gregg Eligh, Tracey Harper Farrington and Frances Litman. We would also like to thank our volunteers who worked on organizing the competition and judging: Richard Webber, Dan and Gail Takahashi, Normand Marcotte, Judy Plummer, Richard Letourneau, Jill Turyk, Lorna Zaback and Pam Irvine. All images are available for viewing on the website under competition results for May 3, 2018 at *victoriacameraclub.ca/Competitions/CompetitionResults.aspx*.

Gregg Eligh: Gregg is a good friend to the Club and members for his judging over the years and his interesting workshops. He currently teaches continuing education photography courses at Camosun College. Gregg has worked across North America and the Caribbean doing corporate, editorial, catalogue and advertising photography. Gregg's work can also be seen in several gallery shows every year. *gregg@elighphoto.com*.

Tracey Harper Harrington: Tracey has been recognized by her peers as one of the best photographers in Canada. She is a multiple award winning photographer in business since 2012. Recently her business has been transformed into Fusion Artistry. She was awarded National Photographic Artist of the Year by the Professional Photographers of Canada and is recognized as an International Photographic Speaker and Judge. She has earned her Fellowship and her Masters of Photographic Arts MPA for Canada. She was named the BC Photographer of the Year, National Portrait Artist of the Year, and has won the Kodak Gallery Award, Nikon Excellence Gold Awards, and numerous Judge's Choice awards from Canada and the UK. *fusionartistry.com*.

Frances Litman: Frances has been a professional photographer for over two decades. She is a busy lady and we are lucky to have her in Victoria and willing to support our Club. Frances is the leading drive behind Creatively United for the Planet, an annual festival and showcase for Earth Week activities, for which she has won numerous awards. She writes and produces television shows, leads photo tours around the world and has judged for Canadian and international photographic competitions. *franceslitman.com*.

FUJIFILM

X-T100

The Ideal Companion for Creative Everyday Photography

250 590 1718
1005 Broad Street, Victoria
www.lensandshutter.com

Lens&Shutter
CAPTURE YOUR INSPIRATION

PrintLAB has MOVED!

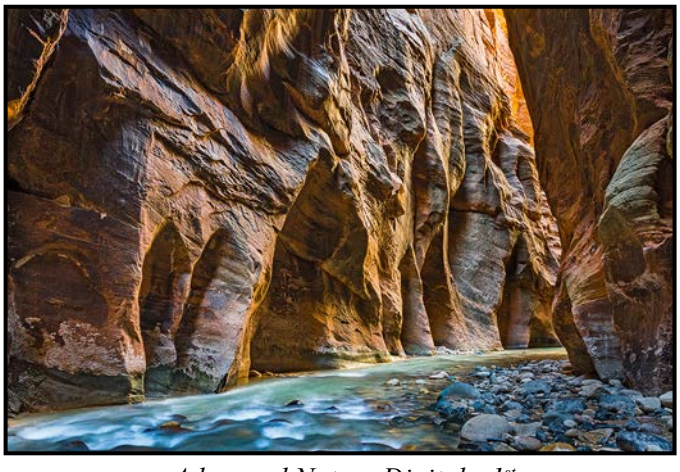
All the great printing, mounting & framing you love, now air conditioned with 50% more elbow room. Come visit us at 3350 Tennyson Ave (near Uptown)

www.theprintlab.ca • 250.590.3373

THE PRINT LAB

Advanced Wildlife Digital - 2nd
"Salmon Dinner" by Jonathan Adams

Photographer's comments: This photo was taken on a whale watching tour. We had travelled to Race Rocks and were watching the sea lions basking on the rocks. There was a sudden commotion just ahead of our boat, and I quite literally pointed my camera in the direction of the splashing and started shooting. The action was too fast to see what was going on; it wasn't until after the water had settled and I was able to review my photos that I realized what I had captured. It was the quintessential "lucky shot!"

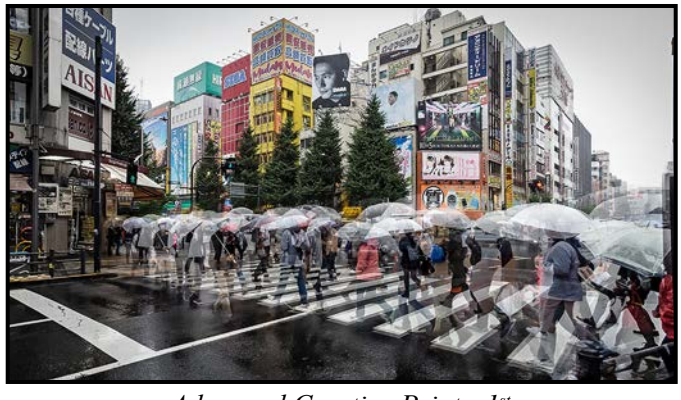


Advanced Nature Digital - 1st
"Rivers and Canyons" by Mars Romer

Photographer's comments: I took this image in Zion National Park in the fall of 2017. It was approximately a two hour hike up-river in a canyon with steep cliffs and waist deep water. This is a single image taken in a part of the canyon where I noticed the sun's angle cast shadows that show its texture and shape. The original image was a bit underexposed to preserve the details in the bright areas. I then lightened up the dark areas using Adobe Lightroom's global and local adjustments.

Advanced Monochrome Print - 3rd
"Zip" by Ian Crawford

Photographer's comments: Blacksmith Fraser MacKay of the Vancouver Island Blacksmith Association uses a zip cutter to prepare a piece of steel. I took several shots and chose the one with the best spark pattern. It was chosen by CAPA as one of the images to represent Canada in the Four Nations Competition for 2018. Image taken with a Canon 7D at ISO 800, f5 at 1/15 second with my favourite lens, a Sigma 24-105 mm at 57 mm.



Advanced Creative Print - 1st
"Ghostly Crosswalk" by Normand Marcotte

Photographer's comments: This image was taken in Tokyo while pedestrians were crossing a street. I shot the three images within a few seconds of each other. The images were merged in Photoshop Elements 14. Using layer masks, I allowed the people in all three images to "blend" together. I used Lightroom 6 to add a vignette and increase the "ghostly" effect with a local brush adjustment to reduce saturation and contrast of the blended pedestrians. Shot with a Canon EOS 6D, 17-40 mm wide-angle zoom at f8, 1/125 sec, ISO 640.

Advanced Nature Print - 2nd
"The Cheetah Twins" by James Kissinger

Photographer's comments: This photo was taken in the spring of 2016 on a "photo safari" in southern California. The "Living Desert" near Palm Desert is a beautiful 1,200 acre wildlife zoo in a park-like setting. One of the main attractions is the young Cheetah triplets on loan from a breading program in Texas. I captured two of them in this image. The one and half acre enclosure for the Cheetahs is well thought-out and they seemed to be comfortable and safe within a natural setting.

Advanced Open Print - 1st
"Spring Awakening" by Lois Burton

Photographer's comments: This image was shot with a Canon EF 100 mm f2.8 macro lens, 25 sec. at ISO 100. The flower was extracted from the background and a new background with a similar colour palette was created using artistic brushes, filters and blurring techniques. Some petals were duplicated and transformed to build more depth into the image. Some petals were left with hard edges and some were blurred and softened to lose the hardness. Colour values were intensified with a hue and saturation adjustment layer and a brightness and contrast adjustment layer were added.

Advanced Open Digital - 1st
"Horse Latitude" by Leah Gray

Photographer's comments: The Camargue horse is an ancient breed indigenous to the Camargue area in southern France. These horses live in the marshes and wetlands of the Rhône delta. They turn grey as they mature, which makes for a consistent grouping for a photographer. Add a bit of ocean water and the light of a setting sun and the scene can take on an award-winning quality. One just needs to be there at the right time, in the right position, with the proper settings, and be quick enough to capture the right moment.

Advanced Theme Digital - 2nd
"Boxing School – Havana" by Steve Barber

Photographer's comments: This image was taken in 2016 while I was on a photo tour of Cuba with Richard Martin, a professional photographer from Kingston, Ontario. While in Havana, Richard arranged for us to tour a private boxing school. We were able to watch and photograph the students while they were sparring with each other. The ring was outside but covered with a canvas roof. I managed to catch this fellow glancing at me as he was resting between rounds. The canvas roof gave us perfect filtered natural light for portraits.

Intermediate Altered Reality - 3rd
"Hands-Up" by Richard Letourneau

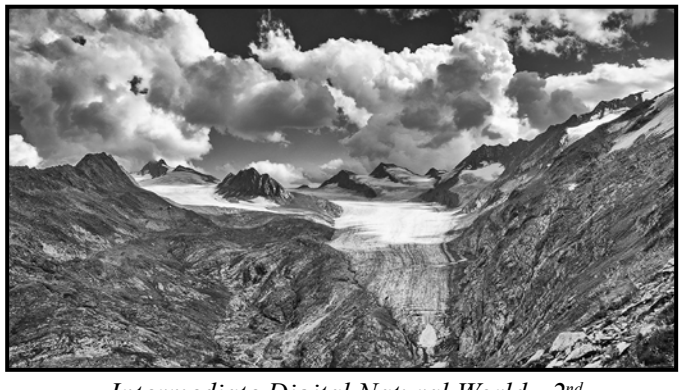
Photographer's comments: This was originally entered in the January 2018 Intermediate Creative category. It is a composite image, comprised of 10 layers. The two principal images were isolated: face and hands. A greenish-yellow background colour fill was used. Once the two images were layered (with hands on top), the forearms and top of the head were masked out. Another mask revealed lips, goatee, nose and eyes. A texture layer was added to the background. Final adjustments included hue/saturation, brightness, contrast and exposure. This provided the dark sepia-toned look, making the image more surreal.

Intermediate Digital Theme - 2nd
"Sunday Morning Sailing Practice" by Daria Yu

Photographer's comments: I've always liked shooting boats and tankers. This particular day, we went to visit Fort Rodd. Spying the sailboats, we raced to the lee of Fisgard lighthouse, put the telephoto lens on my Nikon, with Mark's shoulder as a tripod, and waited for the right moment for the sun to light up the boats. It was a bit foggy, but the colours of the sailboats still stood out. To my surprise and delight, the tanker appeared in post-production when I increased the contrast. The ghostly tanker adds an additional layer of interest to the image.

Intermediate Digital Open - 1st
"Malahat Morning" by Mark VanArragon

Photographer's comments: This was taken on an early January morning from the top of the Malahat, overlooking Haro Strait and the mainland. The layered banks of fog, clouds, mountains, water, and trees caught my eye, and I scrambled around on the hillside until I found a location that worked for me. Eventually the rising sun illuminated the clouds, and back-lit the mountains and fog. This shot was taken on a full frame Nikon, at a focal length of 450 mm, which compresses the 100+ kilometres depth of field into a viewable image. I had to do very little post-production, as I happened to be in the right place at the right time for a decent shot.



Intermediate Digital Natural World - 2nd
"Glacier in Retreat" by Anne McCarthy

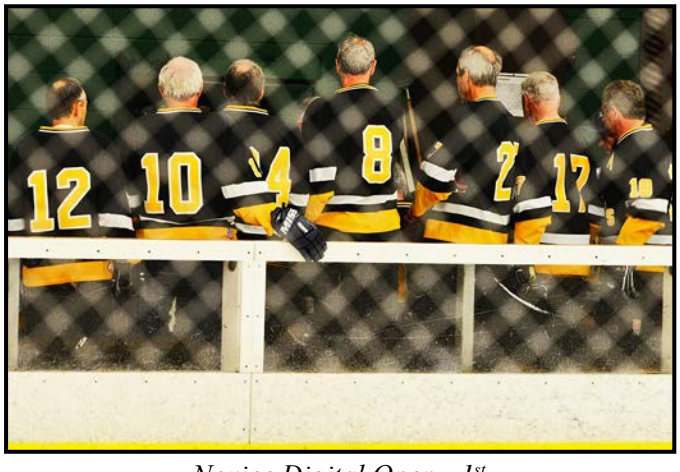
Photographer's comments: The longer hike from Obergurgl to Ramolhaus hut in Austria ends with a challenging steep climb. A much needed rest spot provided this view back to the Gurgler Ferner glacier. The glacier has retreated so much that a suspension bridge is now needed to cross from the glacier side to the alpine hut. Skies were active by the afternoon although the downpours held off until after we had settled into Ramolhaus (3,006 m) for dinner, beer and a bunk. If you look closely on the left you can see another unused hut.

Intermediate Digital Wildlife - 2nd
"Incoming" by Evan Guengerich

Photographer's comments: This photo was taken on the Chilkat River flats just outside of Haines, Alaska. Late each fall, up to 3,000 eagles are attracted to the area to feed on the spawned-out salmon. As eagles do, they seem to spend as much time fighting as feeding, even when the food is plentiful. This particular bird was coming in fast to chase away another bird from a salmon carcass on the river bank. Captured with a Nikon D500 and Sigma 500 mm, f4 at 1/4000th of a second.

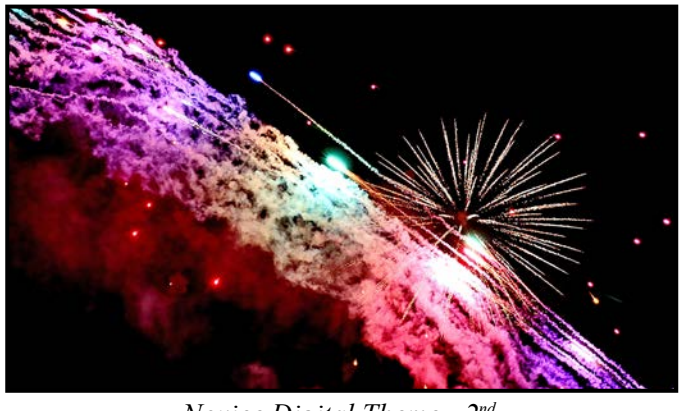
Novice Open Print - 1st
"Heritage Rose" by Tim Agoston

Photographer's comments: This image was taken almost two years ago in the park behind St Ann's Academy. It was shot with a Nikon D7000 and Sigma 105 mm Macro lens. I used f14 at 1/200 sec and ISO 500. I processed it in Lightroom, then sent it into On1 10 to apply the textures to the image. Never having done any texturing before, it was fun to try and create the vision of an old print that would have been on the wall in a turn of the century home.



Novice Digital Open - 1st
"Pep Talk before the Big Game" by Sharon Moysey

Photographer's comments: This photo was taken during the 2015 Snoopy's Senior World Hockey Tournament at the Redwood Empire Ice Arena in Santa Rosa, CA. Charles Schulz, creator of the comic strip Peanuts and owner of the arena, started the tournament in 1975. This is the Victoria Ol' Pluckers team (Bob Moysey, my husband, is #12). I liked the pattern that the netting protecting the crowd made, adding a bit of a surreal touch to a quintessential hockey moment for a team of any age: the pregame pep talk.



Novice Digital Theme - 2nd
Smoke gets in your Skies" by Penny Authier

Photographer's comments: My husband and I were new to Victoria and wanted to take in the Canada Day fireworks. We decided to find a spot at the Delta Hotel, assuming it would be ideal for photos. As it happened, they were launching the fireworks about ten metres to my right. I put my camera on AI Servo and employed the "spray & pray" method, along with a right to left pan. Post production was minimal. I had been using song titles for some of my competition entries and I thought that "Smoke Gets in Your Skies" suited this capture perfectly.

Novice Digital Wildlife - 3rd
"Successful Hunt" by Kim Smith

Photographer's comments: I was walking along the dike at Brunswick Point in Delta, BC on a cold January morning when I saw two photographers shooting a Red-tailed Hawk within 10 metres of the dike. I thought if he doesn't mind them, he won't mind a third person, and he didn't. While shooting, he flew right down in front of me, caught his breakfast and went right back to his perch. An unforgettable experience!

Novice Digital Natural World - 1st
"Winter Storm" by Deb Thurlbeck

Photographer's comments: It was a perfect day for storm watching at Esquimalt Lagoon. Gale force winds created an angry spray off the crashing waves, seagulls fought the air turbulence in search of dinner being churned to the surface. My challenge was to capture the mesmerizing fury of the storm while trying to protect my camera. I post-processed the RAW file in Black and White to capture the dramatic power of the storm and moodiness of the day. The image was taken with a Nikon D7000, a 16-85 mm lens at 1/1000sec., f5.6 nd ISO 100.

Make Plans to Attend the

2018 PSA Annual Conference

Salt Lake City

September 30 to October 6, 2018

The Photographic Society of America is pleased to announce its 2018 International Conference of Photography in Salt Lake City, Utah. The Conference runs from Sunday, September 30 through Saturday, October 6 and features world-class speakers, Division presentations, photo workshops and spectacular tours. The PSA Conference provides many great opportunities to share your photographic interests and improve your photo skills. Come to Salt Lake City and renew old friendships and make new ones.

For more information visit the PSA Website:
http://www.psa-photo.org

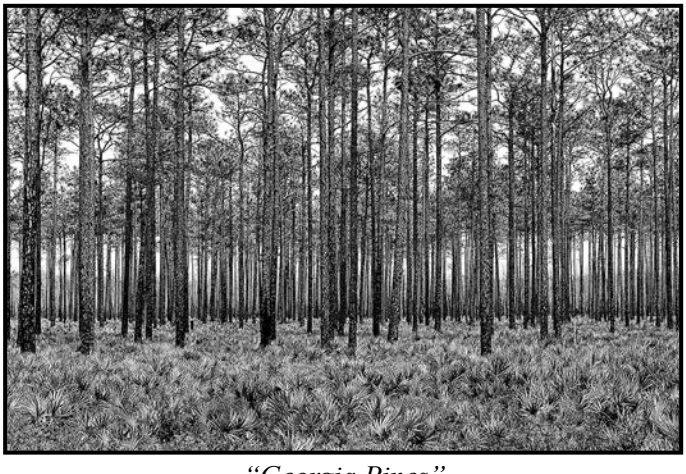
Member Profile: Doug McLean

My interest in photography began in the 1960s as a kid when my parents gave me my first camera, a Kodak Instamatic 100. I happily shot many slides of family and friends and landscapes that caught my interest.

Several years later I began shooting with a Kodak Retina S1 and then a Konica Auto Reflex T SLR and I began to take more care in composing my images. In my twenties, after I moved to Calgary to take a job as a petroleum geologist, I added a Hasselblad system to my SLR.

I then began experimenting with black and white photography and developing black and white film and print images in a makeshift darkroom in my basement. I chose black and white because I was inspired by the striking black and white photographs of famous photographers such as Ansel Adams, and also for practicality. Black and white processing was easier and cheaper than colour film processing.

A highlight at that time was taking an intensive zone system course (6 full days per week for a month) at the Banff School of Fine Arts, as it was then called. The course was focused on shooting and processing black and white images and was taught by a former US navy pilot who was in the NASA program. He was an amputee because of a crash on an aircraft carrier deck that ended his career, but he did not let this slow him down. This course inspired me and focused me in the black and white world.



"Georgia Pines"

After I married and we had our two children in the 80s, I packed up my dark room but continued taking photographs of family, friends and travel, shooting with a Rollei 35S as my go-to camera. The Rollei was a great camera, small, compact and with killer optics, reminding me of the trend to smaller digital cameras that has happened in the last few years. In 2002 I transitioned to Nikon digital and have never looked back. I shoot now with full frame and crop sensor Nikon DSLRs. I also rediscovered my love of processing through digital processing and now enjoy processing and printing my own images.

"Marsh Wren"

I joined the Victoria Camera Club nine years ago. A highlight has been meeting other photography enthusiasts, learning from their images and talking with them about their approaches. I have also volunteered on various Club committees: novice image judging and critique (two years), transforming Members' Night (two years), and the External Competitions Committee (five years), including expanding the number of external competitions the Club enters. I have found volunteering very rewarding and I highly recommend it to others; it can involve just a few hours a month. I also compete in internal and external Club and individual competitions. I have found this motivating and a good way to keep my skills sharp.

My current areas of interest are nature, landscapes, panoramas, close-up, focus stacking, HDR, people, events of all kinds, photo manipulation, digital dark room techniques and archiving my own and family images through conversion to digital. My biggest challenge has been the latter endeavour..

The best piece of photographic advice that I have received was "Compete to improve your images." Initially I resisted but in hindsight I see that following that advice advanced my skills in and enjoyment of photography a great deal. Another good piece of advice was to incorporate a personal interest into my photographic themes. I have recently been successfully taking images in the outdoors on backpacking and hiking trips and on train-spotting excursions.

Photography has been a life-long passion that I hope to enjoy for many years to come. Being a member of the VCC has greatly enhanced my photographic experience.

Take the Summer On!

Explore your passion for photography at Camosun College.

Develop new skills. Create new experiences.

COURSES	STARTS
Teen Photography Intro-level (Class Max. 10)	July 9-13 from 9 am – 1:30 pm daily
Adult Photography Intro-level (Class Max. 10)	July 9-13 from 2 – 6:30 pm daily July 16-20 from 9 am – 1:30 pm daily
Adult Photography Intermediate (Class Max. 10)	July 16-20 from 2 – 6:30 pm daily

ALL SESSIONS INCLUDE FIELD TRIPS!

Creative. Inspiring. Encouraging.

REGISTER TODAY ***camosun.ca/ce 250-370-3550***

INFORMATION? *250-370-4565 or business@camosun.ca*

CAMOSUN
Continuing Education

TANZANIA WILDLIFE

Wildlife adventures for people who love to take photos

15 day photo safari to
Ngorongoro, Serengeti & more!
May 22–Jun 5, 2019

Led by Victoria-based
professional photographer
Mike Byrne

CLOCK TOWER IMAGES

www.clocktowerimages.com • 250.889.6700

Inside the Sony A7 III

by Matt Speight

In the early days of digital photography there were "The Megapixel Wars" (said in a deep, announcer-type voice). Cameras manufacturers, with their latest models, were very focused on the camera sensor size ("megapixels"), as were consumers. The more megapixels, the better the pictures, or so they thought. Some of these new higher pixel cameras were actually worse at taking pictures to the dismay of the new owner due to the dynamic range, noise levels at high ISOs and processing speed being ignored. Regardless, some still believe that more megapixels are better. So, I was delighted to see the Sony A7 III at 24 megapixels was one of, if not the most pre-ordered camera for 2018, perhaps indicating the official end of the Megapixel Wars.

To help support this holistic approach, I thought I would go over the technologies of the A7 III and why it's so appealing to so many with only its meagre 24 megapixels.

Firstly, lets talk about the sensor. The Sony A7 III is the first-full frame camera at a reasonable price range ($2,600) to have a backside-illuminated (BSI) sensor. Now we covered the backside illuminated sensor when we discussed the ($4,300) D850 late in 2017. But reading my synopsis on the BSI sensor will likely be quicker than finding your back-issue and then trying to find the previous article. A standard sensor has the pixel lens and photodiode, with the matrix wiring between it. This means light must pass through the matrix wiring to reach the diodes. However, on a BSI sensor, the matrix wiring and photodiodes are reversed, which means light hits the photodiodes directly without going through the wiring, increasing the light transmission by up to 50%.

When you only have 24mp on a BSI sensor, it gives you greatly improved low light performance. I have seen shots at 6,400 ISO with good detail and tonal range from the Sony. Have you ever grabbed your camera quickly, without checking your settings? You just had to grab the shot, only to find later that your exposure settings are way off and you lost the shot. I have seen dark, almost pitch black RAW files, 5-stops under exposed, recovered into very usable images from the A7 III. I have only seen this ability before on large format digital cameras. This is a case of where more pixels don't mean more in terms of image quality. The camera also has an impressive 15-stop dynamic range when the exposure is spot on. This gives the images a very pleasing natural look with no bleached highlights and good shadow detail. Again, fewer megapixels are giving you more.

While we are talking about capturing images quickly, the A7 III has a 4D focus with 425 contrast AF points that work in conjunction with 693 phase-detection points. It inherits this from Sony's $6,000 flagship A9 camera. With 93% of the frame covered by the AF points, this makes for reliable, quick focusing and tracking so even the most difficult-to-capture subjects will be sharp. The best part of the auto focus is the face detection with eye priority. It's amazing how it stays locked onto the eye, even if your subject is side-on and moving across the frame. You can even set it up to give priority to focus on the eye of your choosing.

A7 III shoots at an impressive 10 fps frame rate and has a "silent shutter" option at the same frame rate, perfect for a wedding ceremony, a dance performance, or a sleeping baby. In terms of AF speed, options and frame rate, the A7 III hits well above its price point for a full frame camera.

Now, it has an electronic viewfinder that can take some getting used if you are an SLR shooter. To be honest, when I put it to my eye, I could hardly tell the difference between it and a traditional SLR viewfinder. As it is an EVF (electronic viewfinder) you not only see what you are going to get composition-wise, but like a DSLR, you are also seeing if your white balance and exposure are correct. This means you spend a lot less time chimping and more time taking photographs.

The A7 III has a stabilized body which will work in conjunction with their stabilized lenses so you get the best of both worlds. There is a very effective 5-stop body stabilization for normal to short lenses and the lens stabilization will override this when you are using a longer lens.

Sony has given you two card slots, headphone socket and a mic input which is good to see on an enthusiast to entry level pro camera.

A constant complaint of the Sony A7 series has been its lack-lustre battery performance. For the A7 III, they borrowed the FZ100 battery from the A9 which has double the capacity of the FW50 in the A7 II camera. Expect to get at least around 700 shots from a full charge.

For most people, the A7 III is the only camera they'll ever need. Sony has made a concerted effort to create an amazing camera at a great price point. They have succeeded in making a modern classic.

This is a pivotal camera that marks the point where Sony has become the leader in the industry. It will be interesting to see how Canon and Nikon will respond and to watch if the megapixel wars have indeed, ceased.

Twelve Useful Ideas

by Joseph Finkleman

These ideas are a distillation of sixty years as a full-time photographer, fifty of which have included making and showing art. Twenty years of commercial work left its mark in understanding not only the physical process and perfect technique but, more importantly, learning how to "see" what the subject actually is versus the end use of the clients' needs. While gaining my BFA and MFA I had to refine my precise intent and my effectiveness in communication. Beyond that, in over one hundred art shows and endless artist's statements, over the decades of my life that I have been teaching photography, I know that when I teach these points, people learn how to "see" and to translate that vision into the reality of an image.

"It was about her Ex"

1. Know the purpose or end use for the image, whether for pleasure, memories, communication or commerce. If you are not clear, the image will lack clarity of intent.
2. Know what things need to be done to indicate your intentions. If pleasure, whose? If it's your pleasure, what is the essence of what pleases you about this particular image? If it is memory, what memory do you specifically want to retain? If communication, what is the message, subtle, perhaps deliberately ambiguous, but nuanced, such that the reader of the communication knows you were deliberate? If commerce, what is the client's end use and message?
3. Once you have clarity of intention and how to indicate that intention, the image itself must be pre-visualized. Before the camera is out of the case, nearly everything should be known: where exactly is the camera's Point-of-View, what is the approximate exposure without the light meter, the scene's luminance values which need to be absolutely known so the exposure is precise.

   This exposure is set to what the scene evaluation dictates: wherever the Zone value 9 is, the exposure cannot clip it, but must expose for it. Zone value 6 would be the exposure point but many digital cameras exceed 10 stops so we have to adjust our exposure so that the Zone value 9 in the scene is value 9 in the exposure. That gives the greatest amount of information to work with. Many people underexpose; that is the worst possible mistake in the process.

"Street Story"

4. Pre-visualization is key but the best part of the process is the story and how we tell it. We need to know as much as we can about the story. The more we know, the greater the power of the image. This clarity of thought is crucial, because otherwise we cannot compose the image. The more conscious we are of the process, the greater the impact the image has.
5. Technique matters in an inverse ratio to the uniqueness of the story. If an UFO came down to earth and you were the only person who witnessed it, even if your image did not conform to the rule of thirds, your horizon was crooked, you did not properly expose the capture nor properly process it, and it wasn't tack sharp, who would care? No one, because the subject matter would be so unique. But if you photographed a flower and did the exact same things,

how many people would offer friendly advice? The story really matters. The way you tell it does not, unless the subject matter is hum-drum. The more quotidian, the greater the need for an interesting telling of the story.

6. Once you are certain of the story, you have to do the hardest thing: push your own feelings aside and deconstruct the scene so that you can make an image out of it. The scene has structures: fauna, flora, or mineral, they are just structures. Each structure is made up of planes. Each plane has a myriad of smaller planes that define its texture. Texture is best defined by crossing (side) light. Any lighting contrary to crossing light will diminish texture.
7. Isolation of subject, both in cropping in camera and/or focus, is where clarity of thought and intent are expressed. If the subject is everything, then everything has to have equal value. If some things are more important than others, then that relationship must be defined. If there is a subject and a context, the subject must show precedence over context. One way is with cropping and selective focus. Another way is in post-processing: move the overall context of the story one stop darker to de-emphasize it, by contrast emphasizing the subject.
8. Once your gear is at the ready, the precise exposure is measured and locked into the camera (manually, hopefully), and the digital capture is made, the first half of the process is done. The second half is the processing to final output. This is the crucial part of the process. Remember that there is no image at all in a digital capture until it is processed. There is no such thing as "straight out of the camera!" Any image you can see has been processed, either by the selected (or default) settings for a JPEG in your particular camera, or by you.
9. When you expose for a Zone value 9 you have to know what your particular camera can do. It is important that you do some experiments with your camera: Make your exposure meter read in one spot. Measure the whitest area that has detail, because the exposure meter reads everything as neutral grey (neutral grey is the midpoint between black and white). A simple test at base ISO will tell you how many stops you can add to the neutral grey reading before you clip. Back off a half of a stop and test that you are no longer clipping.

   Even clipping in one channel is problematic but by trial and error you can find out precisely how many stops you need to add to your exposure meter's reading of "brightest white" to gain a detailed white without clipping. You should write this down and then test every ISO from base up to whatever your camera can do before noise can't be acceptably removed. Once you have that information, always find the white detail area of your scene and expose properly for that. The RAW image when downloaded should look light and wimpy, not saturated or pretty at all. This is where you want the exposure because when you process it everything will go well. If you underexpose you are throwing away subtlety of colour and gaining noise in your shadow detail.
10. The biggest hump to get over is the pleasure we experience in being somewhere we deem beautiful. While we don't want to avoid that pleasure, to photograph it, we need to put it aside and objectively look at the scene in regard to shape, form and lines. That is the stuff of composition. The more we can objectify the scene, the stronger the image because, in the end we are creating an illusionary document that is emphatically not the scene at all. Instead it is our vision and our way of communicating it to other viewers.
11. The second biggest hump to get over is the thing itself. The subject of our story is in effect the photographer's story; it is the story that we choose to portray. In doing so, the clearer the thought, the greater the impact and the closer we get to some sort of human truth about whatever the subject is. The closer to a small human truth, the greater the impact.
12. The third and greatest hurdle is: how do we actually touch another with our art? When we touch someone else, they will respond by telling their story, by telling you what the image means to them. That is one of the greater pleasures in life: when we can reach out and touch someone in a language of pictures that is uniquely our own vision.

"Kids being Kids"

The images that I have chosen each have a story. I have found that your story of an image is far more interesting than my story of that image. Your story includes your life and thoughts which to me is a perpetual mystery.

How I Did It

Shark Coming at Me

by Ken Johnston

I'm sure that many accomplished underwater photographers have taken close-up shark pictures but for the uninitiated, here are a few odds and ends about this image. This is a curious two-metre long, habituated Caribbean reef shark, some of which would at times be bumping into me. The location was a chain of mangrove reefs named Jardin de la Reina (Garden of the Queen) about a four-hour boat ride off the southwest coast of Cuba.

I had seen some photos of sharks and salt-water crocodiles advertising a company that provides a floating lodge and dive services on the reefs. Once there, I had the very good fortune of having two executive producers of the TV series "Shark Week" in our group of eight photographers. They were intent on finding lots of big sharks for their summer episode called "Godzilla the Shark".

Underwater photography presents unique challenges compared to land photography. Water is much denser than air, and full of particles that absorb both light and colour as you descend. Red disappears around 5 m, orange around 8 m, yellow around 13 m and green around 25 m. This is rectified by either staying shallow or bringing light to deeper water. However, strobes tend to cause "backscatter", the reflection of suspended particles in the water, which can look like extreme noise. Aiming strobes can also be a challenge as water magnifies objects by about 35%, so where does one aim? Shooting in virtually zero gravity can also be tricky. For you techies, I use an Olympus Micro 4/3 camera, a Nauticam housing, a pair of Sea and Sea strobes and either an 8 mm fisheye or a 12 - 50 mm zoom lens. Any of you up for diving?

Blue Cosmos

by Richard Letourneau

On the day that I captured the railing image used in this composite, I took multiple shots of it from different angles. I had no particular plans for those images when I took them but after processing and applying a black and white mix to them I was intrigued by the repetitive pattern, the curve, as well as the textures of the stone on which the railing was mounted.

Two weeks later around midnight, I tried to capture the starry night from my back yard. Despite a few external lights nearby I met with moderate success but certainly didn't see the Milky Way. It was just an experiment.

We endured some horrific forest fires in the summer and fall of 2017. One day in mid-September the sun was a very deep reddish colour as the sky was overcast with heavy smoke. Another interesting photo opportunity!

It wasn't a conscious decision at the outset of the 2017-2018 VCC competition year, but I submitted and scored very well with several altered-reality composites. In hindsight, it's not surprising I chose this category as I get totally immersed in the artistic and creative experience and love to experiment.

I decided I really wanted to do something with the railing image as it was quite a favourite of mine. After a few iterations I decided to use the hazy sun image as a "moon", to overlay my star image, and to apply colour.

The final composite used these three images, plus six adjustment layers: masking, curves, vibrance, colour fill, hue/saturation and brightness/contrast. I had to mask out the city skyline which was visible above the railing.

Canon 7D Mk II: Railing: 1/125 sec, f11, focal length: 24 mm; ISO 200. Stars: 30 sec, f4; focal length: 10 mm; ISO 2500. Sun: 1/100 sec f22; focal length: 190 mm; ISO 100.

Tuesday Shoots

by John Scratchley

It's summertime again and the Tuesday Group trips continue as usual. This is a great time to grab your camera and join the weekly shoots. It is a great way to meet other Club members and pick up some new tips and ideas, often over lunch. New members are always welcome.

All "Summer Draw" topics for the Tuesday Group will be drawn from a hat just prior to departure. These topics have been collected from participating members at a previous shoot. We meet at 10:00 a.m. on the fourth floor of the Bay Centre before proceeding to our day's location.

July 3rd: Esquimalt Lagoon. The Coburg Peninsula is always a great spot for photography. In addition to scenic views of the lagoon, historic Fisgard Lighthouse and the Strait of Juan de Fuca, there are often seasonal birds and vessels of different sizes either cruising by or at anchor. The beach offers interesting driftwood, beach grasses and of course the backdrop of the Olympic Mountains.

July 17th: Island View Beach. Located in Central Saanich, it is a great place for photography. This long stretch of beach is full of wonderful subjects for the landscape photographer. There are trails a little off the beaten path to follow and the thickets are home to various species of birds. If you like landscape, black and white photography or even macro, Island View Beach has something for you to take a picture of.

July 24th, August 14th and 28th: The Summer Draw.

August 7th: Government and Wharf Streets from Humboldt St. to Pandora Ave. This is the height of tourist season. Let your talents run free and take images of this busy part of Victoria. Shoot some street photography, harbour scenes, or old town architecture. Shoot whatever captures your attention and imagination. It is here!

August 21st: Selkirk Trestle Area. The waters of the Upper Harbour are always very busy at this time of year. Harbour ferries, racing canoes and kayaks frequently ply the waterway. If you like architecture, this site offers some interesting buildings. Herons, kingfishers and other bird-life can also be seen. The area is anchored by the historic old trestle bridge dating back to an earlier time. This is a great spot for candid photographs of people.

Some events require registration and a fee may apply. Please check the Club calendar for details related to each field trip.

Weekend Shoots

by Vanessa MacDonald and Teri VanWell

Join us on our summer field trips! A few more may be added as the summer progresses, so stay tuned and check the calendar.

July 14th: East Sooke Park. A beautiful park to visit in the summer months with a white sand beach, clear turquoise waters, a varied coastline, sea life populating the shallows, low-hanging Arbutus trees and easy coastal hiking trails. Lots to photograph in this park, so a range of lenses will work depending on what you like to shoot. If you're lucky you may spot a sea lion or find the petroglyphs! We will arrive there around the low tide, 0.1 m occurring at 10:20 am. Our plan is to park at the Aylard Farm entrance and explore that section of the park. We will go for lunch afterwards at the 17 Mile Pub.

August 10th: Star Gaze at Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse. Star Gaze is a public event that will take place on the grounds of Fort Rodd Hill and Fisgard Lighthouse National Historic Site during the Perseid Meteor Shower. This is one of the few opportunities that we have each year to access the grounds during sunset, blue hour and full darkness. The grounds will be partially lit for exploring but do bring your flashlight or headlamp to help you get around.

The event will run from 8 pm to midnight so there will be ample opportunity to get a range of different shots during all the stages of twilight. There will be other activities offered on the grounds for the evening which will include presentations, tours, the opportunity to look through telescopes provided by members of the Royal Astronomical Society of Canada, overnight camping at a cost, etc. We will provide more details on the website as they become available. We are also seeking volunteers for this event. Last year we had a select group of VCC photographers assisting the public for an hour, providing tips and answering questions about night photography. We have been asked by the Fort Rodd Hill Staff to do the same again this year. If you are interested in helping out, please send us an email (*fieldtrips@victoricameraclub.ca*).

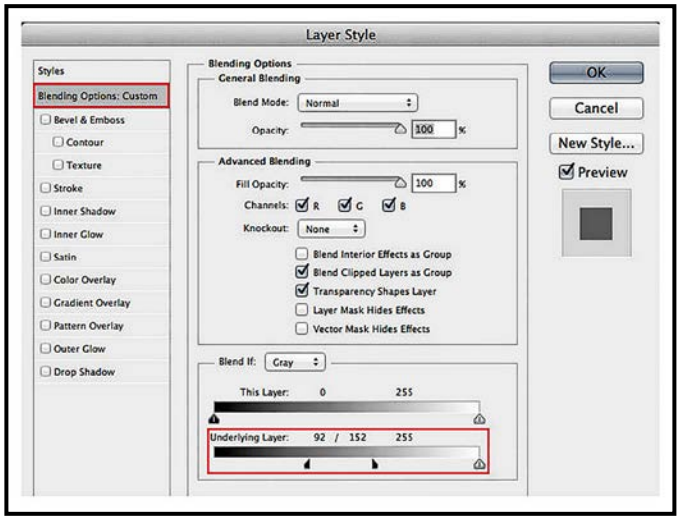
If you are planning to attend either of these events, please register on the calendar page. If you have any further questions about field trips or would like to volunteer to lead a field trip, please get in touch with us at *fieldtrips@victoriacameraclub.ca*. We are always open to field trip suggestions and are looking for new group leaders to add to our volunteer roster. The more volunteers we have the more events we can schedule.

The Blend If Function in Photoshop

by Gordon Griffiths

The Blend If tool in Photoshop is not often used by photographers in their workflow. This function is an efficient colour-channel-based tool for quick masking that can create smooth transitions when blending different elements. It operates using sliders to let you selectively adjust a layer's opacity based on input either from the current (selected) layer or the visible ones beneath it.

The Blend If sliders can be accessed in several ways. The easiest is to double click on the right side of the active layer in the Layers palette. They can also be accessed in the layer drop-down menu and lastly by clicking on the "fx" symbol at the bottom of the layers palette. When it is activated, the Layers Style dialogue opens and the two Blend If sliders are found at the bottom of the box.



The top sliders control the selected layer and the lower sliders affect the lower visible layers. If the left (black) slider is moved to the right the darkest tones in the selected layer(s) are removed. Conversely, if the white slider is moved to the left, the lightest tones will be removed. Each slider may be split by holding down the Alt/Option key, clicking on the slider and moving one-half of the slider. By separating a slider, a soft transition can be created between blended and unblended values.

This composite photo was created with Blend If in less than a minute. The photo of the tree taken just after sunset was combined with a photo of the moon. A selection of the moon was added as a layer to the tree photo. The Layer Styles dialogue was opened and the lower sliders (the tree photo layer) were adjusted. The black slider was split and the right half was moved to 23. The result was the darkest pixels, representing the tree and branches, were allowed to come through the bright pixels in the moon layer. Now the moon appears behind the tree and its branches are outlined against the bright moon. After the Blend If sliders were used, I scaled the moon using the transform tool and moved it into a position that appealed to me.

"Butchart Gardens Moon"

The Blend If tool can also be used to colour grade (colour balance) an image. The saturation of a single colour or a particular brightness level can also be done with Blend If. The default setting of the function is grey but the drop down menu also allows one to work in the red, blue and green channels. Colour can be intensified in one area of an image or an individual colour can be reduced or removed from an image. In the red channel the white slider represents red. If the white slider is moved all the way to the left, red is removed from the image and its opposite colour on the colour wheel, cyan and its tones, remains. The same procedure happens with blue channel (blue and yellow) and the green channel (green and magenta).

The Blend If tool can be used in other ways. A particular area of a photo, for example, the mid-tones, can be sharpened using this tool. Once that sharpening has been completed, the sharpened layer can be moved anywhere in the layer stack and it will only affect those selected mid-tones.

Noise Reduction is often required in medium dark to shadow areas. Blend If makes that application easy.

Blend If can assist to avoid tone compression caused by applying a vignette to an image with strong highlights. This tool can be used to protect the highlight areas. As a result, the vignette becomes more subtle as bits of the highlight are allowed to peek through it, and the tone compression disappears.

There are a number of excellent videos on YouTube demonstrating the application of the Blend If tool.

Lightroom: Options, More Options

by Robert Forbes

In October 2017, Adobe upset the Lightroom cart with multiple different offerings confusingly all named Lightroom. Lightroom 6 is the end of the you-bought-it-you-own-it perpetual Lightroom versions and will now get no further updates (the last one was January 2018). Lightroom, going forward, is available only on a subscription basis and comes in flavours: Lightroom Classic 7 is the Creative Cloud subscription version that you install on your computer. Lightroom Mobile runs on Apple and Android devices and Lightroom CC 1.0 is the new cloud-based Lightroom that seems to be aimed, initially, at the point-and-shoot casual photographer.

In this article, we will focus on the changes and improvements from Lightroom as we all knew it, to the next version, Lightroom Classic 7, which works on your computer using your drive's folders/directories.

Each upgrade (we are now at 7.3.2) brings new camera and lens profiles, bug fixes and (generally) performance improvements, but also some interesting new features.

Importing with Embedded Previews: To help you sort and select your pictures faster (depending on your computer's speed) you may want to select Embedded+Sidecar as your Build Previews option in File Handling. This will cause Lightroom to use the embedded jpg preview file that you saw on the back of your camera (if shooting RAW or RAW + JPG) or the jpg file (if you are shooting JPG only). Embedded previews are used by the Library module until you start editing and then it will build its standard previews. You can also turn on a new preference to build the standard preview file when your computer is not doing anything but waiting.

Folders and Filter Improvements: You can now filter through your folders to find things a little faster and can also create a collection from the contents of a folder (or a map pin in the Map module) with a right click. A new option to filter on photos that have been edited or not is also available.

Range Mask: The adjustment brush, radial filter and graduated filter tools in the Develop module now have a "Range Mask" feature which allows you to make a selection on colour or luminance, making this powerful feature even more capable. You can select up to five different colours to mask your filters. After you have selected your colour or your luminance range, press Alt/Opt and move the sliders to see the amount of masking you are doing.

Auto Tone: This feature in the Develop module has been reworked significantly and has some new tricks. In addition to the basic panel controls auto will also set Vibrance and Saturation and can be re-used after you crop (which changes the tone range in the image). This has been improved after analysis of tens of thousands of edits made by professional photographers. It may not be the only edit you make but it may be a good first start.

New Profiles: Adobe has introduced profiles in the Develop module that you can apply to your RAW photos, including several new creative and monochrome profiles. These are different than Presets which adjust your sliders. You can have multiple presets applied to a photo but you can only have one profile for a photo. The default is "Adobe Color." You can also use these profiles in your mobile and cloud-based Lightroom versions. Think of profiles as choosing a treatment or picking a film emulation.

Face Recognition: Tired of going through your photos to tag the people in them? Adobe has added an improved face recognition algorithm in the latest release so now you can re-index your photos again. This has the end result of tagging people in your photos so you can quickly locate those pictures you took of Aunt Hazel.

Performance: There are significant improvements in many areas. Tasks that are "batch processing" or work on many photos at once have been the focus of much of this, so building previews, importing, photo merging, rendering adjustments, and so on should be much faster (depending on your computer, of course).

Still using Lightroom 5 or Earlier? While these versions are solid performers that just keep going you are missing out on some features which are more than bells and whistles and may actually save your shot:

- **Dehaze:** This removes atmospheric haze (or adds it). This is great for those shots of spectacular topography 10,000 metres below you too! You can also use it on the adjustment brushes.
- **Guided Upright:** Easily correct those skewed views of tall buildings falling backwards.
- **Reference View:** This lets you have two pictures side-by-side in the Develop module and edit one, so you can easily match colours etc.
- **Photo Merge for HDR and Panorama:** This does some pretty amazing things if you have bracketed shots (minimum of two) or if you need to stitch a panorama, without having to go to a third-party tool.

Many improvements were introduced with Lightroom 6 in February 2017. It's been only a year, but it does seem so long ago.

Beginners' Corner: The Art of Reflections, Part 2

by Josée Ménard

In the May/June Beginner's Corner, we discussed reflection basics, how they can intrigue our eyes and peacefully transport us into the landscape. In the end, I mentioned I would extend on the idea that reflections can bring a very creative idea to the story being told in the image.

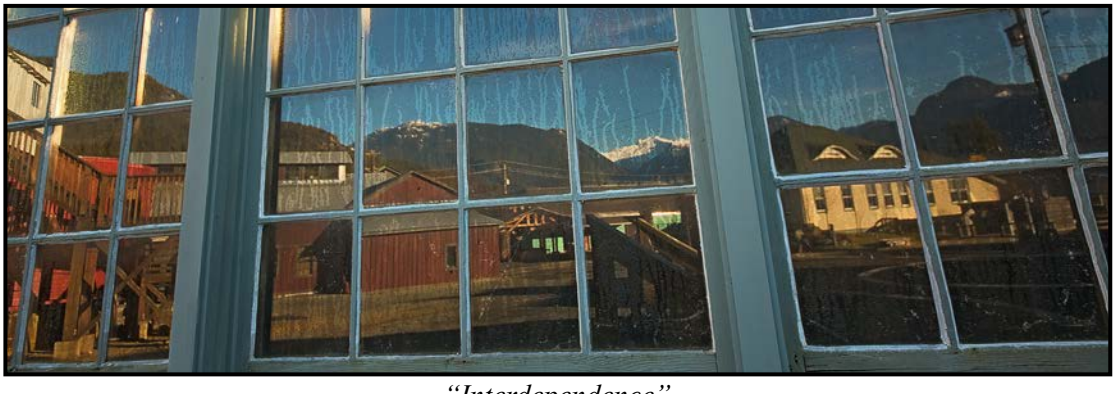
"Passage In Time" is a good example of how a simple photograph of the old tabletop scale in a storefront would not be as interesting if not for the introduction of the passing pedestrian silhouettes, thanks to the glass reflection, creatively adding a new dimension to the image. The forces of nature naturally redirect the inquisitive eyes of the passers-by from noticing the photographer capturing something in the store window to wishing to know what that is. In turn, they direct the viewer's eyes as they themselves wish to see what they are looking at. With careful positioning, I removed myself from the scene. By snapping a few shots and looking at the LCD display, I ensured I was not in the reflection or shadows of the window. Once ready, I patiently waited and pressed. The many "oh-almost" and "darn-missed" produced success. Great! Two pedestrians, positioned just before the scale and looking in towards it. Bonus, they are tall enough to increase the effect desired. Are they really looking at the scale? Not sure, however their eyes seem to be. In turn, their eyes guide the viewer's interest towards the old scale in its new job.

In the elongated image "Interdependence", instead of creatively seeing how the selected composition elements interact before me, I searched for elements to incorporate in the image. Worth a thousand words, the final image communicates the message in mind. In this case, the image was to be displayed in an historical and resources themed exhibit celebrating the history of the Britannia Mine (near Squamish, BC), a delightful new challenge.

"Passage In Time"

Historical research completed my knowledge and six degrees of connections. Personally, an old neighbour was born and grew up in this town. I also finally knew what three small balls discovered in the depths of my garden were all about. The strength of their iron ground the copper ore out of the mined rock.

Unlike other shoots, a deadline looms. Repeated visits did not produce the desired effect or natural light. Finally, the winter skies and setting sun cooperated. While the sun was still bright, I set my camera up until all of the town's surviving buildings were in position and I disappeared behind a thin frame. Achieved in-camera with minimal post-processing all of the chosen elements synchronized. My position and wide-angle lens allowed me to capture the naturally elongated image with minimal distortions. True to its history, the interwoven community of the mine, the town, its hardworking and dedicated people reflected within the warmth of the setting sun in the mine's windows. Hopefully the viewer would see some the survival interdependence. That will remain a mystery.



"Interdependence"

VICTORIA CAMERA SERVICE LTD.

WE SERVICE ALL MAKES & MODELS

250 383 4311

victoriacameraservice.com

WE PURCHASE BODIES & LENSES FOR PARTS

OPEN 9 to 5 MON - FRI

Looking For Something?

Rent or buy long lenses, tripods, filters, and remote triggers to capture just the right moment.

Image ©Jason Kazuta

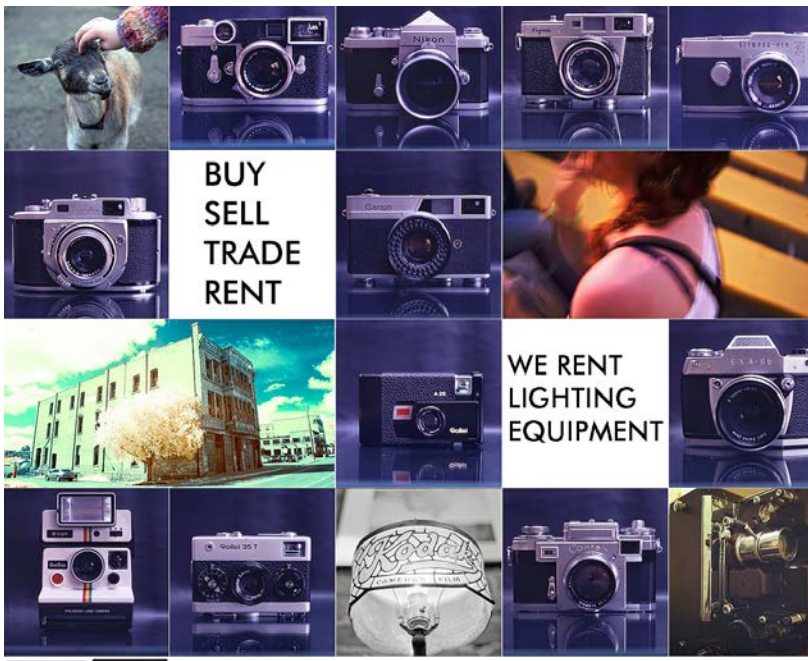
We carry the latest from Canon, Nikon, Sony, and Fujifilm, as well as pro lighting, grip, camera bags, filters, and even film and darkroom supplies.

BEAU PHOTO

Beau Photo Supplies
Vancouver, BC
604.734.7771
1.800.994.2328
www.beauphoto.com info@beauphoto.com

Sales • Rentals • Advice

www.beauphoto.com/blog
@beauphotostore
Beau Photo



CAMERA TRADERS

Discount for VCC Members

110-560 Johnson Street,
Victoria, BC., 250-382-6838
www.camera-traders.com

Nikon
KERRISDALE CAMERAS
WWW.KERRISDALECAMERAS.COM
FOLLOW US FOR THE LATEST NEWS & DEALS:
www.facebook.com/KerrisdaleCameras
https://twitter.com/KCLvictoria
https://twitter.com/KCLmain
D7500
Nikon
I AM CHASING MOMENTS
VISIT US AT: 3531 Ravine Way, Saanich, BC
By Tim Hortons in Saanich Plaza | 250-475-2066